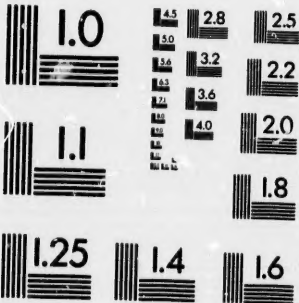


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To

His Excellency, the Right Honourable
Sir Edmund Walker Head, Bart,
Governor General of British North America, &c.

The Memorial,

of

WILLIAM, F. COFFIN, ESQUIRE,

Ottawa 5th March 1866.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable
Sir Edmund Walker Head, Baronet, one of
Her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, Governor
General of British North America, &c. &c. &c.
The humble Memorial of William John Coffin
of the City of Ottawa, Esquire, Grandson of John Coffin, late
Mayor of Boston in the State of Massachusetts, one of the
United States of America and late of the City of Quebec in
the Province of Canada, Esquire, deceased;

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH—

That in the year 1775, John Coffin, the grandfather of your memorialist, a native and citizen of Boston, in the State of Massachusetts, being conspicuous for his loyalty and devotion to the cause of his king, was compelled to flee from Boston, and to take refuge in Canada, in the city of Quebec;

That in the same year, 1775, the grandfather of your memorialist, was, by acts of the Legislature of Massachusetts commonly known as the "Boston Confiscation Acts," with others, proscribed by name, and banished, and his property confiscated as a penalty for his adherence to the loyal cause. On arriving in Canada, he bought a property at the *Près de Ville*, in the Lower Town of Quebec, where he endeavoured to re-establish his business. Part of this property is still in the possession of his family;

That in the autumn of 1775, when the Province of Quebec was invaded by the American forces, and the city of Quebec was besieged by Generals Arnold and Montgomery, John Coffin joined the "Quebec Enrolled," or British militia, and served, under arms, during the whole of the eventful winter of 1775-76;

That on the morning of the memorable 1st January, 1776, John Coffin defended the same battery, at the *Près de Ville*, in the Lower Town of Quebec, with the well known Captain Barnsfare, when assailed by the American forces. In front of this battery fell, Gen. Montgomery and the chief officers of his staff, and with them the last hopes of the American cause in Canada;

That published accounts agree in assigning the whole merit of the defence of Quebec at the "*Près de Ville*," to Barnsfare; but that, at this late period, your memorialist has it in his power to prove (without disparagement to a very gallant man) that this merit was more than shared by his grandfather, John Coffin.

VIDE
Appendix
No. 1.

No. 2,

No. 3.

In support of this assertion your memorialist produces:

1st,—Copy of a letter dated Jenningsbury, December 13, 1779, and signed "Guy Carleton";

2nd,—Copy of a letter dated Quebec, 28th July, 1776, and signed "Allan Maclean";

3rd,—A certificate signed "Henry Caldwell," Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding British Militia, and dated Quebec, 2nd May, 1787.

The first of these letters was written by Sir Guy Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester, who, on the 31st December, 1775, was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Province of Quebec, and who was present in the city of Quebec during the siege.

The second was written by Col. Allan McLean, H.M. 87th Regt., commanding the garrison during the siege of Quebec, 1775-76.

The third document was signed by Colonel Caldwell, father of the late Sir John, and grandfather of the present Sir Henry Caldwell who commanded the British Militia at the memorable siege of Quebec 1775-76.

These documents prove, by the best evidence, that whatever may be the merit justly assigned to Captain Barnsfare for the defence of this port, an equal measure of praise was at least due to the American Loyalist, John Coffin.

What that merit was, time has long since shown. On that memorable winter morning, the flame of fidelity to the British Empire, paling throughout the American continent, flickered uncertainly over the walls of Quebec. At midnight the desperate Arnold had forced the St. Roch Suburbs, and the Lower Town, and although obstinately resisted, doggedly fought on, hoping and looking for a junction with Montgomery. An hour later, and a resolute volley had decided the fate of a great country;—the brave Montgomery was slain—his detachment annihilated; Arnold was wounded;—the American army in full retreat. Quebec was saved; and the flickering flame of fidelity to the British Empire blazed up therefrom, thenceforth and for ever, a beacon of light, inextinguishable in Canada.

The people of Canada owe a debt of gratitude to the men who (humble instruments in the hand of Providence) secured to them the homes they enjoy, the laws they live under, and the flag which floats over them. And, it may be asked, who were the humble instruments upon this momentous occasion?

General Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of the Province, and present at Quebec at the time of the siege, says of Mr. Coffin, in his letter of the 13th Dec., 1779: "His gallant and judicious behaviour on the morning of the 31st Dec. '75, gives him a stronger claim on me: for to him, with the assistance of "Barnsfare, I attribute the repulse of the rebels on that side of Quebec where Mr. Montgomery attacked in person; while the success on the "other was very different."

Colonel Allen Maclean, who commanded the garrison at the siege of Quebec, says, six months afterwards, on the 28th July, 1776, addressing

Appendix
No. 1.

Mr. John Coffin: "To your resolution and watchfulness on the night of the 31st December, 1775, in keeping the guard at *Près de Ville*, under arms, waiting for the attack which you expected; the great coolness with which you allowed the rebels to approach; the spirit which your example kept up among the men; and the very critical instant in which you directed Captain Barnsford's fire against Montgomery and his troops: to those circumstances alone I do ascribe the repulsing of the rebels from that important post, where, with their leader, they lost "all heart."

Appendix
No. 2.

Henry Caldwell, Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the British Militia at the siege of Quebec, certifies by a document given under his hand at Quebec, May, 1787, that, "John Coffin, Esquire, served in the British Militia, under my command, during the siege of this town by the Rebels, from November seventy-five to May seventy-six, during all which time he conducted himself and behaved with the greatest spirit, zeal, and activity in the king's service, which by his example was much promoted, particularly on the attack of the 31st December, when he very much distinguished himself."

Appendix
No. 3

It appears, moreover, that independent of the services thus loyally and energetically rendered, Mr. Coffin had been subjected to heavy pecuniary losses from the invasion of the Americans and the siege of Quebec. He had abandoned "affluence"—as Colonel Caldwell says in another part of his letter—at the command of duty; and of the scanty relics of his property, brought with a large family to Quebec, he lost during the siege by the hands of the Americans, effects of the value of nine hundred and sixty-one pounds, Halifax currency, (£961 cy.).—These pecuniary losses, though proved before Commissioners appointed by Sir Guy Carleton, and subsequently admitted as correct by the report of the Committee of the Executive Council of the Province, 3rd March, 1802,—hereinafter more particularly referred to,—were never compensated.

This sum of £961 cy., admitted to be due by the Report of Council in 1802, would at the present period be worth a very large sum of money to the descendants of John Coffin.

Your Excellency's memorialist further represents that it appears by a Petition, the original of which is herewith enclosed, bearing date at Quebec, Feb'y 9th, 1802, that John Coffin had, on the 17th March, 1796, in consequence of the Proclamation of Lieutenant-Governor Alured Clarke, in 1792, applied for a grant of the Township of Wakefield, in Lower Canada, in the name of himself and thirty-nine associates; that the prayer of this petition had been favourably recommended by Council, but that no further proceeding had taken place;

And by his Petition aforesaid, the original of which is enclosed, John Coffin, after setting forth very briefly his losses and services, prays that the Governor and Council will be pleased to take into consideration his said losses, and grant to him, his wife and nine children, twelve hundred acres of land each, in some tract set apart for Loyalists.

This Petition was answered by an Order in Council, dated 3rd March, 1802, and approved by His Excellency the Governor in Council, of which a certified copy is herewith produced, so emphatic in the language employed, and so honourable to Mr. John Coffin, that in justice to the memory of his grandfather your memorialist takes leave to transcribe it at length.

Appendix
No. 6.

Extract of a Report of a Committee of the whole Council, dated 3rd March, 1802, on the Petition of John Coffin, of Quebec, Esquire, —approved by His Excellency the Governor General in Council, 15th March, 1802:

"The Committee give full credit to Mr. Coffin's representation in this Petition of his losses and sufferings at Boston previous to his arrival in this Province, in the year 1775, resulting from his approved loyalty and attachment to His Majesty's person and Government, and of his losses in this Province since his arrival here, occasioned by the invasion of it by the rebels, and the consequent blockade of this city for the whole of the winter of the year, 1775-6. Some of the members of the Committee have an intimate knowledge of the facts (so honourable to Mr. Coffin) that are mentioned in the certificate annexed to his Petition. But independent of Mr. Coffin's well-founded pretensions to every reasonable consideration on the part of the Government, on account of his losses and services, the Committee from their personal knowledge of his merits, can have no hesitation in recommending that he may obtain the Prayer of his memorial: that is to say, that he and his wife and their nine children may have one thousand two hundred acres each of Her Majesty's waste lands, to be located in any one of the Townships set apart for loyalists and other deserving subjects."

Certified,
[Signed] H.W. RYLAND.

Appendix
No. 7.

It appears further by another Petition of John Coffin, Esquire, the original of which accompanies this memorial, that in pursuance of the above Order in Council, he did, on the 1st day of September of the same year, 1802, apply specially, that the quantity of land granted to himself and family should be located in the Township of Ely.

This Petition was referred to a Committee of the whole Council, by order of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, 8th March, 1803, but it does not appear to have been acted upon.

Appendix
No. 8.

It appears further by another Petition of the said John Coffin, the original of which also accompanies this memorial, that subsequently, to wit, 5th December, 1803, he made further application that the quantity of lands awarded to himself and family should be located in the Township of Kildare.

This Petition was referred to a committee of the whole Council, by order of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, on the 10th Dec., 1803, and does not appear to have been acted upon.

This singular inconsistency between the will and the deed of the Government may be accounted for by the fact, that about this time, and

for many years after, orders from England interfered with the disposal of the wild lands of the Province by the local authorities, for your memorialist finds it stated at a subsequent period in a draft of a Petition prepared by John Coffin, for presentation to the Honorable Thomas Dunn, Esq., Administrator of the Government in Council, 1806, that, "Your memorialist hath lately been informed that his application for lands in any of the Townships so prayed for, could not be complied with by reason of instructions contained in a despatch from His Grace the Duke of Portland, directing that, the residues of the Townships in which grants had been already made should be sold to the highest bidder, on account of the Government." It is not believed that any such sales ever took place. The obstruction was created, but no benefit ever derived from it by the country or Crown.

Appendix
No. 9.

Your memorialist further represents, respectfully, that the said John Coffin and Isabella Childe, his wife, departed this life, respectively, in the year 1808 and 1812, without having obtained any grant of the lands so awarded to them or their nine children, by the Order in Council of March, 1802, and that no grant of land in pursuance of the said Order in Council of March 1802, has ever been made in favour of any one of the parties therein mentioned;

That for many years before the death of the said John Coffin and Isabella Childe, his wife, and for many years afterwards, their children were scattered through the world, the sons employed in the military and naval services of the country, and the daughters married to military officers, and were disenabled from co-operating for the purpose of preferring these claims and obtaining their rights.

The eldest son, John Coffin, was an officer of the Commissariat, in which he died 3rd March, 1837, being a Deputy Commissary General.

The second son, William Coffin, the father of your memorialist, entered into the army and served in different parts of the world. He retired from the service, a captain in H. M. 15th Regiment of Infantry, and died a Brevet-Major, in England, in the year 1835.

The third son, the Hon. Thomas Coffin, was a member of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada, and died 1841.

The fourth son, Francis Holmes Coffin, entered into the Royal Navy, served during the long war with France, and died. an admiral, in — 1843.

The fifth son, Nathaniel, resided in Upper Canada, where he served during the war of 1812, and died Adjutant-General of Militia of Upper Canada, in 1835, universally regretted.

The sixth son, James, died 1834, an Assistant Commissary General.

The eldest daughter, Isabella, became the wife of Colonel McMurdo, of H.M. — Regt., left Canada with her husband, and died in Scotland.

The second, Susannah, became the wife of the Hon. John Craigie, and died also in Scotland.

The third, Margaret, married her cousin, Lieut.-General Sir Roger H. Sheaffe, Bart., and died also in Scotland.

The fourth, Anne, died, a spinster, in Quebec.

By the above recapitulation your memorialist desires to show that while doing their respective duties in those states and conditions of life to which it had pleased God to call them, and in which their country and king had placed them, all, with one exception, in the military and naval services, it was not in the power of the male members of the family of John Coffin of Quebec, for many years, to combine and concert measures to renew their claims; nor, indeed, to understand the exact nature of the claims which, in justice to themselves, they ought to have concerted measures to vindicate and maintain.

Appendix
No. 10.

Still, it appears that in 1816, during the administration of Lieut.-General, Sir Gordon Drummond, a petition was prepared and presented by several of the children of John Coffin, a copy of which accompanies this memorial, renewing the repeated application of their father, and praying that the grant made to the individual members of the family by the order in Council of 3rd March, 1802, might be carried into effect by the location of lands in the Townships of Eaton and Dudswell.

This application appears to have been transmitted by the Government of the Province to England, and its fate may be inferred from the following correspondence between Henry Goulburn, Secretary to Earl Bathurst, and Major-General, Sir Roger Haille Sheaffe:

[Copy.]

DOWNING STREET, 17th Dec., 1816.

Appendix
No. 11.

SIR,—I am directed by Earl Bathurst to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th July last, and to acquaint you, in reply, that since the date at which it appears to have been in contemplation of the Council at Quebec to recommend a grant of land to Mr. Coffin and his family, it has been found necessary to lay down new regulations with respect to the mode in which the waste lands of the Province are to be granted; and Lord Bathurst does not feel himself at liberty to make a grant to Mr. Coffin's family upon any other terms than those prescribed by the present regulations.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most ob'dt servant,

[Signed,] HENRY GOULBURN.

To Major General,

Sir Roger H. Sheaffe, Bart.

It will be observed that Earl Bathurst does not in any way object to the grant, but he insists upon "terms," and appeals to "regulations" which did not exist when the grant was made by order in Council in Canada. These "terms," which certainly ought not to have had a retrospective effect, and which ought not to have been permitted to influence a grant not "contemplated to be recommended," according to Mr. Goulburn, but actually made according to the order in Council of 3rd March, and approved by the Governor in Council, 18th March, 1802, are stated by Sir Roger Sheaffe in a private letter conveying the above transcript of Mr. Goulburn's letter, and which also accompanies this memorial, to

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have been "the payment of fees from which formerly you would have been exempt, and contain onerous conditions not in existence at the date of the order in Council."

These fees alone, on a large number of patents, would have amounted to a sum of money which, in the circumstances of the family, and in the uncertain value of the lands, operated almost as a prohibition to their attainment.

These repeated disappointments, and the renewed dispersion of the few members of the family who had been able, almost accidentally, to make the combined effort last above related, and the difficulties and delays of communication which existed in those days between parties scattered by sea and land, appear to have discouraged all further efforts on the part of the immediate descendants of John Coffin.

Your Excellency's memorialist begs leave, now, respectfully to represent that he is the eldest son of William Coffin, the second son of John Coffin of Quebec,—that your memorialist came to Canada in 1830,—that in conversation with his aged uncles, John and James Coffin, and with his aunt, Miss Ann Coffin, he had frequently heard mention made of the services, losses and claims of their father and his family, but could never obtain any clue to the documentary evidence necessary to make the subject intelligible, or to admit of an effort being made to submit these claims to the equitable consideration of the Government of the Province.

That in 1847, ten years after the decease of her brothers, John and James Coffin, Miss Ann Coffin died at an advanced age at Quebec, and that it is only within a recent period, in the final disposal of old papers connected with her estate, that the documents and papers referred to in the preceding part of this memorial have come to light.

It is, at this point, the duty of your memorialist to state to your Excellency that, of the three documents hereinbefore first enumerated and produced in connection with the statement of his grandfather's services at the siege of Quebec, one alone is original, to wit: the certificate signed Henry Caldwell, and dated Quebec, 2nd May, 1787. The other two, to wit:

Letter from Guy Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester, dated Dec'r 13th, 1779.

Letter from Col. Allan Maclean, dated Quebec, 28th July, 1776, are only copies of originals, which have disappeared, and although anxiously sought for by your memorialist, have not yet been found.

The copies are all in the handwriting of the late James Coffin, Asst. Commissary of Quebec, whose well known character is a guarantee for the truth of the assertion, when presented in his handwriting as "copies." These copies appear to have been made and retained on some occasion when the originals had been forwarded and used in proof. It may be fairly presumed that having been inclosed and transmitted with some one of the numerous petitions presented, possibly the last one sent to England, they have in this way been finally lost sight of.

It is in the power, however, of your memorialist to produce colla-

teral proofs which confirm the authenticity of the above presented papers, as being true copies of the originals they purport to represent.

Appendix
No. 1.

And first, with respect to the authenticity of the document, bearing date "Jenningsbury, 13th Dec., 1779, and signed "Guy Carleton."

Among the papers which have come into the possession of your memorialist is a letter in the handwriting of John Coffin of Quebec, addressed to his brother, Nathaniel Coffin, also proscribed by name in the Boston confiscation Act, and who, flying from Boston, had taken refuge in England in 1775. In this letter, which bears date 29th July, 1778, is this following passage :

Appendix
No. 12.

"Two or three days since I called upon General Carleton, and inquired what was the prospect of compensation for losses sustained by particular persons in consequence of the rebels coming into the Province of Canada in 1775. His answer was that Colonel Christie had received £3,000, Col. Caldwell £2,000, and William Grant £1,500; and he believed that was all they proposed paying in England,—that the rest of the account was returned this spring to be further inquired into.—"I told him I had an account among them, the foot of which was about £860, stg., and that the money would be very convenient to me. He replied that neither of those gentlemen could in any respect be better entitled to that favor from Government than I was. He advised me to draw up a memorial to Gen. Haldimand, who, he said, was not unacquainted with my conduct in this garrison, and he would present it himself, which he accordingly did, and told Gen. H. before me that Mr. Coffin was very serviceable during the siege, and that his conduct on the 31st Dec., 1775, at the post attacked by Mr. Montgomery, was more like an old experienced officer than like a gentleman not bred to arms; and desired Gen. H. to transmit my account to the Treasury, and recommended the payment. He answered he would do it with much pleasure. I told them I was much obliged to them both. Gen. Carleton replied, you are not at all obliged to me; what I have said to Gen. H. is no more than doing you justice. I should have mentioned you in my publick letter, but was afraid of the consequence to your friends (meaning that he imagined the rebels would resent the part I acted upon my friends.) He advised that my agent should apply to Treasury, and that I should furnish him with a copy of my account; lest the one sent home by Gen. H. should be mislaid in the office. He also proposed that my friend should call upon him to back the application, which I make no doubt he will do most heartily, as he never promises without meaning to perform. He is one of the best private characters in the world; his publick one you are not a stranger to. I relate the before mentioned conversation (much as it may savour of vanity) to let you know what dependance I can have upon Gen. C.'s interest in this affair. * * * I hope Gen. Carleton's interest with the Treasury will be sufficient to procure the payment of my account."

The letter, from which the above is an extract, was, as before mentioned, addressed by John Coffin to his brother Nathaniel, in London, 29th

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July, 1778, not long after the conversation to which it refers. In accordance with the recommendation made during that conversation by Sir Guy Carleton, Mr. Coffin appointed his brother to act as his agent in London, who was furnished with a copy of the account; "lest the one sent home by Gen. H. should be mislaid." It is evident from the whole tenor of this letter that when it was written Gen. Carleton was on the point of departure for England. Mr. Coffin, therefore, advised his brother and agent to act upon the further kind suggestion of Sir Guy, "and call upon him to back the application, which, "as he never promises without meaning to perform," he did "most heartily," by his letter dated "Jenningsbury, Dec. 13, 1779." If it was not sufficient to procure the payment of Mr. Coffin's account, the fault certainly did not lie with Sir Guy Carleton.

This letter also reveals why Mr. Coffin's name was not mentioned in the "Publick Letter" or despatch announcing the repulse of the American forces, in which Captain Barnsfare's name was handed down to posterity. Gen. Carleton feared lest the mention of Mr. Coffin's name, at that time, and in connection with such an event, might prejudice his friends and relatives still residing in the United States. In the excited state of public feeling at that period it is impossible not to acquiesce in the propriety of the precaution, which also explains the omission of Mr. Coffin's name on the occasion when, by Sir Grey Carleton's subsequent testimony, "to his gallant and judicious behaviour, with the assistance of Barnsfare, I attribute the repulse when Mr. Montgomery attacked in person;" and by the further testimony of Col. Allen Maclean, "at the very critical instant in which you directed Capt. Barnsfare's fire against Montgomery and his troops."

This letter avouches its own authenticity. It accompanies this memorial. It is in the handwriting of John Coffin. It bears the mark of naturalness and truthfulness. It was written by one brother to another in all the confidence of brotherly intercourse, and with no idea that it would ever see light. It was written to back up a claim of compensation, not for services but for losses. Unconscious witnesses to the same fact, this communication and the letter of Sir Grey Carleton corroborate each other. Mr. Coffin does not seem to have attached that value to his services which men of the present day will do. Loyal service to the Crown was, with men of his stamp, so much of an instinctive act, that they hardly seemed to think it meritorious.

Of the existence of the original letter from Lord Dorchester additional proof is furnished in a letter herewith produced, dated Quebec, Dec'r 9th, 1808, and signed H. W. Ryland. Mr. Ryland was Clerk of the Executive Council. This letter was addressed after the death of Mr. John Coffin, to Asst. Commissary, Gen. John Coffin, his eldest son. It enclosed "a letter from Lord Dorchester, which had recently been transmitted "from Upper Canada by Mr. Justice Powell, for the purpose of being laid "before the Governor-in-Chief, which has been done accordingly as a most "honorable testimony of your father's merits and services." How this

Appendix
No. 13.

Appendix
Nos. 14 & 15

No. 16.

original letter came into Judge Powell's possession can be easily shown. Mr. Powell had long been a friend of the Coffin family. He was in England in 1782; that year Nathaniel Coffin died in London. Two letters are inclosed from John Coffin to William Dunning Powell, Esq., requesting Mr. Powell to obtain from among "his brother's late papers the original letter from Brig. Maclean," which, having been addressed by Col. Maclean to Mr. Coffin himself, had been by him transmitted to his brother Nathaniel in England. It may be inferred that when in search of the original letter of Brig. Maclean, Mr. Powell found among the papers of the deceased gentleman, the original letter from Lord Dorchester, which, it is to be observed, was addressed to Mr. Nathaniel Coffin, and had no doubt up to that time been retained by him in London, as at the point where it was most likely to be serviceable to his brother's interests. It is natural to suppose that this letter had remained in Judge Powell's possession, unconsidered, until the death of John Coffin in 1808, recalled it to his memory, when it was transmitted through the Clerk of the Executive Council at Quebec, for the perusal of the then Governor-in-Chief.

Appendix
No. 2.

To establish, beyond a doubt, the authenticity of the letter from Col. Allan Maclean, Brigadier, Commanding the garrison of Quebec during the siege of 1775-6, is a matter of still greater importance. Col. Maclean commanded the whole garrison,—upon him specially the particular measures of defence had devolved,—he had named the commandants of every post, and could not fail to know how and by whom each had been maintained. On the 28th July, 1776, six months after the siege, this officer testified spontaneously to the great services rendered by John Coffin, "at the very critical moment when he directed Capt. Barnsfare's fire against Montgomery and his troops, * * * when, with their leader, they lost all heart."

The next paragraph of Col. Maclean's letter, which was at first difficult to understand, seen by the light of subsequent writers, imparts life and truthfulness to the whole. The Brigadier continues to say: "The resolutions you entered into and the arrangements you made to maintain that post when told you was to be attacked from another quarter, was worthy of a good subject and would have done honour to an experienced officer."

Appendix
No. 18.

In explanation of the above passage it is right to say that (as now appears by the most trustworthy accounts of the siege of Quebec,) soon after the death of Montgomery and the repulse of the American troops in front of the post at the "Prés de Ville," information was given to the officer in command there, that Arnold's party from the General Hospital, "advancing along the St. Charles, had captured the barrier at the *Sault au Matelot*, and that he intended an attack upon that of the *Prés de Ville*, "by taking it in the rear. Immediate preparations were made for the defence of the post against such an attack, by turning some of the guns "of an inner barrier, not far from the Custom House, towards the town." — These were the resolutions and this the arrangement to which Col.

be easily shown.

He was in England. Two letters from Mr. Coffin, requesting the papers the original addressed by Col. Coffin, and sent to his brother, Lord Dorchester, and Lord Coffin, and London, as at the other's interests. Judge Powell's in 1808, recalled the Clerk of the Governor-in-

letter from Col. Coffin during Col. Maclean's particular measurements of every and been mainly, this officer John Coffin, Barnsare's fire in their leader,

at first diffidently imparts life say: "The order to maintain quarter, to an experienced

at (as now Quebec,) soon in troops in to the office Hospital, the *Sault des Rivières*, for the guns the town." which Col.

Maclean refers, and which, it may be fairly said, show very clearly who was the presiding genius of the defence at this vital spot,—who was the ready, resolute and energetic spirit who took measures which "would have done honor to an experienced officer."

Both these letters from Sir Guy Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester, and from Col. Allan Maclean, bear upon the face of them, intrinsic evidence of authenticity, which might have spared much of the above recapitulation of proof, if it had been dutiful to the memory of John Coffin to have omitted any particular which could tend to dissipate a doubt on the subject.

It may also be permitted, at this point, again to ask attention to the language of the order in Council of the 18th March, 1802, hereinbefore quoted at length, wherein "some of the members of the committee have an intimate knowledge of the facts (so honorable to Mr. Coffin) that are mentioned in the certificates annexed to his petition." It is natural to infer that the "certificates annexed" comprised either the originals or copies of the letters from Sir Guy Carleton and Col. Maclean; Whether originals or copies, the Committee, from "an intimate knowledge of the facts so honorable to Mr. Coffin" bear ready testimony to the truth and force of these certificates.

In presenting these documents themselves to your Excellency's notice, your memorialist begs to call attention to certificates appended to each, signed "Edward Bowen, Chief Justice Superior Court, Canada East," "E. L. Montizambert, Law Clerk Legislative Council," and "J. G. Irvine, Lieut.-Col. and Prov. Aidé-de-camp to His Excellency, the Governor General." These gentlemen were intimately acquainted with the late James Coffin of Quebec, Asst. Commissary General, and have kindly testified to the fact that these copies are in his handwriting, and further, their perfect confidence that, whatever he had represented to be copies, were unquestionably what he stated them to be.

With these explanatory remarks, the two letters in question are now laid before your Excellency. They will be found among the papers which accompany this memorial, for the completeness and perfect understanding of which, however, they are herewith transcribed as follows:

JENNINGSBURY, Dec. 25, 1779.

SIR,—I have received your letter, and am sorry to learn your brother's misfortunes render it now necessary for him to apply for any assistance beyond his own industry, having observed in all his conduct from his arrival in the Province of Quebec till I left it, a constant attachment and zeal for the king's service, as well as the manner of a prudent, worthy man, I could not but interest myself for him. Yet his conduct and judicious behaviour on the morning of the 31st Dec., 1775, gave him a still stronger claim on me, for to him, with the assistance of Barnsare, I attribute the repulse of the rebels on the side of Quebec when Mr. Montgomery attacked in person, while the success on the other was very different, and brought the town into no small danger. Now, whether we consider the strength of this post, the number allotted to its defence, or

the former services of the officer who commanded, we might have expected as much at least from him,—a remarkable proof this that former services and greater numbers may be outdone by superior vigilance and good sense of gentlemen, though not used to arms. After all this, sir, I cannot but lament that it is nowise in my power to forward Mr. Coffin's wishes; I might, 'tis true, bear witness to his merits, but this, probably, would hurt, not serve, such is the state of things. I have, therefore, only to assure you of my esteem for him, and that I am, sir,

Your most ob'dt and most humble ser'vt,

[Signed,]

GUY CARLETON.

Mr. Nathaniel Coffin.

This letter is indorsed "Copy, letter from Guy Carleton, (late Lord Dorchester) to Nathaniel Coffin,—honourable testimonial of the services and good conduct of John Coffin, senior, during the siege of Quebec, in 1775."

[Copy.]

QUEBEC, 28th July, 1776.

Sir,—As I am, in a few days, going to England with despatches from the Commander-in-Chief, I should be glad to know if I could be of any service to you; power to do you any material service I have none, but your conduct during the siege of Quebec last winter and spring makes it a duty on my part to give you my testimony and approbation of every part of your conduct; truth must always have some weight with his Majesty and his ministers, who, I am certain, wish to reward deserving men like you. To your resolution and watchfulness on the night of Dec. 31st, 1775; in keeping the Guard at the *Près de Ville*, under arms, waiting for the attack which you expected; the great coolness with which you allowed the rebels to approach; the spirit which your example kept up among the men; and the very critical instant in which you directed Capt. Barnsfares fire against Montgomery and his troops; to those circumstances alone I do ascribe the repulsing the rebels from that important post where, with their leader, they lost all heart.

The resolutions you entered into and the arrangements you made, to maintain that post; when told you were to be attacked from another quarter was worthy of a good subject, and would have done honor to an experienced officer. I thought it incumbent upon me to leave with you this honorable testimony of your services, as matters that were well known to myself in particular; and I should be happy, at any time, to have it in my power to be useful to you, and do assure you that I am, with truth and regard,

Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

[Signed]

ALLAN MACLEAN.

Mr. Coffin.

This letter is indorsed "From Col. Allan Maclean, 87th Regt., Commanding the garrison at the siege of Quebec, 1775-'76. To John Coffin, Esq."

It will be observed that for many years after the siege of Quebec, 1775-76, John Coffin appears to have limited his application to a pecuniary compensation for pecuniary losses suffered during the siege from the besieging force. The wants of a large family and reverses in business, arising chiefly from the effects of the siege, weighed heavily upon him, and urged his attention in the direction of prompt compensation. His losses were estimated by the commission appointed by Sir Guy Carleton, at a sum nearly amounting to one thousand pounds, Cy. This amount of loss was never made good either to him or to his family, although others, whose services and sacrifices could not have exceeded his, possessing better interest or knowing better how to exercise it, obtained advantages denied to him.

Appendix
No. 4

No. 16.

It appears that it was not until the year 1796, when John Coffin, having exhausted ineffectually all expedients and applications to obtain pecuniary compensation was, in consequence of the proclamation of Sir Alured Clarke in 1792, induced to claim consideration, and an equivalent for his losses in the shape of a grant of lands. His application was favorably received, but, as is stated in Petition, 9th February, 1802, "the Petitioner has never been informed of any further proceeding thereon."

This petition sets forth his sacrifices in and proscription by the State of Massachusetts,—his loyalty and devotion to the Crown,—briefly, his unrequited losses during the siege, and still more briefly, his services. It concludes by praying for compensation in land.

The order in Council consequent on this Petition, 3rd March, 1802, bears prompt and ample testimony to the truth of the statement made. It admits the devoted loyalty, the sufferings, the unrequited losses, and the services of the petitioner, "some of the members of the Committee (having a personal knowledge of the facts (so honourable to Mr. Coffin) "that are mentioned in the certificates annexed to his petition."

That the grants of land by this same order in Council recommended to be made, and by the approval of the Governor in Council, ordered to be made on the 18th of the same month, 1802, never were made, must be ascribed to the conflicting instructions and inconvenient interference of the home authorities, which, irrespective of local engagements and obligations, paralyzed, for a long series of years, the endeavors of the government of the Province to distribute and settle the wild lands of the Crown.

John Coffin cannot be charged with omitting proper exertion to obtain the lands ordered to him. He had, in 1796, asked for land in the Township of Wakefield. In 1802 he petitioned for land in Ely. In 1803, he applied for land in the township of Kildare. In 1806, during the administration of the Hon. Thomas Dunn, he again made an application. All these applications proved to be fruitless. The disheartening effect of this inert obstruction can be well understood. It can hardly be wondered at that after so much undeserved ill success, the resolute old loyalist should at last have yielded to years and mortification, and like the soldiers of Montgomary when they lost their leader, "have lost all heart."

It has been already stated that at the time of the death of John Coffin, and subsequent to that event, for some years, the family of John Coffin had been dispersed through the world, engaged in the naval or military services of the Crown, and that it was not until after the close of the American war in the year 1816, that certain members of the family were enabled to make a united effort in support of their just claims. The result of that application has been shown by the letter from the Secretary to Earl Bathurst, given at length, (p. 6.) The obstacle here raised, though most unjustifiable (reference being had to the period when the grant had been ordered in the most authentic shape known to the British constitution, and that acquiescence in the original grant ought never to have been clogged by *ex post facto* conditions); naturally enough deterred further immediate urgency on the part of men again separated, again occupied with public duties, in remote stations, and despairing, not of the justice of their cause but of the cause itself, from oft repeated and long continued disappointment. There is reason to believe that another application had been contemplated by the family at a still later period, but that the absence of the original papers which had been sent to England with the memorial to Earl Bathurst, in 1816, the difficulty if not impracticability of recovering them, the too great importance attached to these documents, and the doubts and delays to which their absence gave rise, ended finally in no renewed effort having been made.

Your memorialist has also already stated by what an unexpected accident these papers came into his hands. He has felt it to be his duty to the memory of his grandfather, as well as to the interests of his own family, to lay them before your Excellency, praying, at the same time, from your Excellency, such measure of consideration and justice as your Excellency is competent to award.

He hopes that he has been able to establish satisfactorily,

1. The loyal devotion shown and the sacrifices and sufferings endured by his grandfather, John Coffin, in the cause of his king.
2. His losses and services during the siege of Quebec, 1775-6, losses which have never been repaid, and services which have not been compensated.
3. That although these services and losses were fully and honorably recognised by the government of the day, and compensation awarded, the intentions of the government were frustrated by influences beyond its control.
4. That John Coffin and his family omitted no practicable effort to obtain the lands awarded to them as a compensation for their losses and services.
5. That, unlike others who have neglected lands allotted to them, they encounter no conflicting claims, based on long and adverse possession. All they ask is that the order in Council of the 18th March, 1802, may be carried out by an actual grant of wild and unoccupied lands of the Crown.

6. That the services of John Coffin were of a nature to entitle his descendants to claim from the generosity of the country that consideration they deserve.

Wherefore, your memorialist humbly prays that your Excellency will be pleased to take the premises into your gracious consideration, and give effect to the order of the Governor in Council of March 18, 1802, by ordering further, that the grants of land thereby ordered, be now made and located from and out of the present wild and unoccupied lands of the Crown in the Province,—to be divided among the present descendants of the said John Coffin, according to law.

*And your Memorialist as in duty
bound will ever pray &c
William F. Coffin*

Ottawa 5 March 1850.